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14. ABSTRACT
When required and feasible, MEUs can be aggregated under a single commander to support a single operation. However, US Marine Corps doctrine does not address the command structure once MEUs are aggregated. Once MEUs are aggregated, a Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) Command Element (CE) is required to conduct operational-level planning and coordination and command and control because a MAGTF construct must have a CE over all Marine forces to ensure unity of command and effort. Currently, no organization has a task to command and control aggregated MEUs, but since the number of amphibious ships cannot support the embarkation of a doctrinal MEB and maintain MEU deployments and pre-deployment cycles, a MEB CE can be given the task to command and control aggregated MEUs. Given forward presence, today's force structure, and areas of assigned responsibility, the three standing MEB CEs, Marine Forces Pacific (MARFORPAC), and MARCENT FWD are poised to provide GCC Commanders and the US Marine Corps CE options to command and control aggregated MEUs. The single source solution to this is the 2nd MEB CE.

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Preface

Throughout the past decade, there have been numerous crisis response operations in which an amphibious Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) has supported disaster responses and combat operations. As the US Marine Corps continues to provide a forward deployed amphibious response capability with Marine Expeditionary Units (MEU), there has been a lack of analysis to identify US Marine Corps organizations that can source and provide a Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) Command Element (CE) structure to command and control aggregated MEUs. The latest examples of a MEB CE are dated to the latter stages of Somalia and during the initial deployment into Afghanistan. My deployments with the 31st MEU and the 15th MEU as well as my previous assignment as the 1st MEB G-4 Future Operations/Plans Officer led me into numerous planning teams that attempted to provide force structure around several MEB employment options. However, none of these included a MEB CE to command and control aggregated MEUs. With my assignment to US Marine Corps Command and Staff College, I saw the opportunity through the Commandant's Strategic Initiative Group (SIG) to explore this topic for the Service.

Throughout this research project, Dr Ben Jensen provided me mentorship and avenues of research exploration that turned my work into a document that can be used to change and write amphibious, MEB, or command and control doctrine and strategies. I would also like to thank officers in the 1st MEB CE, 2nd MEB CE, 3rd MEB CE, the Regional Marine Force Component Commands, MARCENT Forward, Total Force Structure Division, Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, and the Plans, Policy, and Operations Global Force Management Officer for the assistance and information they provided to support my research. Lastly, my wife supported many late nights and long weekends throughout the transformation of notes and ideas into my

final thesis. She probably knows this paper better than I do. Without the support of these individuals, this thesis and topic would not have been possible.

Executive Summary

Title: The Command & Control of Aggregated MEUs. Is anyone available today?

Author: Major James Stover, United States Marine Corps

Thesis: Although US Marine Corps' doctrine identifies different categories of MAGTFs, the Marines Corps has not identified a MEB CE organization to command and control aggregated MEUs that are brought together for a unified operation; this service doctrine and operational gap is due to a lack of service level doctrine and service-level analysis of which organizations are capable of providing a MEB CE with today's force structure limitations.

Discussion: The U.S. Marine Corps mans, trains, and equips Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs) to deploy via amphibious shipping in order to provide a continuous forward presence crisis response force to geographic combatant commanders (GCC). Once deployed, MEUs fall under the operational control (OPCON) of a numbered naval fleet, or during a crisis response, under a joint task force (JTF). When required and feasible, MEUs can be aggregated under a single commander to support a single operation. However, US Marine Corps doctrine does not address the command structure once MEUs are aggregated. Once MEUs are aggregated, a Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) Command Element (CE) is required to conduct operational-level planning and coordination and command and control.

In early 1994, and during the latter stages of operations in Somalia, MEUs were aggregated under a standing MEB CE that was deployed from its home station to Somalia. In October 2001, and during initial operations into Afghanistan, a MEB CE structure was created to form Task Force 58's CE, which provided an operational-level CE over two MEUs. However, during Operation Unified Response (OUR), two MEUs were aggregated to support operations in Haiti but no MEB CE or US Marine Corps CE structure was organized and deployed to provide operational-level functions between the MEUs, a US Army centric JTF, and a carrier task force maritime component commander. These three case studies all represent different aspects towards the role a MEB CE structure can take in an aggregated MEU operation.

Conclusion: Currently, no organization has a task to command and control aggregated MEUs, but since the number of amphibious ships cannot support the embarkation of a doctrinal MEB and maintain MEU deployments and pre-deployment cycles, a MEB CE can be given the task to command and control aggregated MEUs. Given forward presence, today's force structure, and areas of assigned responsibility, the three standing MEB CEs, Marine Forces Pacific (MARFORPAC), and MARCENT FWD are poised to provide GCCs and the US Marine Corps CE options to command and control aggregated MEUs.

Introduction

History has proven that amphibious operations provide a form of operational maneuver and response platforms like no other type of operation can, but amphibious operations are contingent upon a sound command and control system and organizational structure. Marine Expeditionary Units (MEU) are the US Marine Corps' continuous forward presence force that responds to the nation's requirements throughout the world. Most recently, Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) concepts have gained momentum as a larger US Marine Corps crisis response capability. Marine Expeditionary Units and MEBs fight as a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) and are trained to conduct operations from a sea base, are self-contained, task organized, and employ a combined arms capability towards a mission.

Currently, the US Marine Corps maintains seven standing MEUs, six regional component commands, and three MEB command elements (CE), but the US Marine Corps has not developed a concept to aggregate two or more MEUs under a single MEB CE. Amphibious operations in Somalia, Afghanistan, and Haiti are three case studies that offer the US Marine Corps different historical points that address ad hoc command structures of aggregated MEUs and can be a starting point for formalizing existing practices. A critical element of a MAGTF is the CE since it will command and control subordinate forces, but as independent MAGTFs aggregate to support an operation, a CE is still required to command and control aggregated MAGTFs. The absence of a CE over aggregated forces has the same consequences as not having a CE within a MAGTF; without a CE, the subordinate forces lack a structure that can provide operational level command and control tasks and ensure unity of effort. Although US Marine Corps' doctrine identifies different categories of MAGTFs, the Marines Corps has not identified a MEB CE organization to command and control aggregated MEUs that are brought together for

a unified operation; this service doctrine and operational gap is due to a lack of service level doctrine and service-level analysis of which organizations are capable of providing a MEB CE with today's force structure limitations.

Scope of Paper

This study conducts an historical case study comparison of three different aggregated MEU operations in order to develop a context for the conceptualization of the optimal, but currently existing, MEB CE organization(s) to command and control aggregated MEUs. By doing this, this paper will identify what existing organizations can provide the aggregated MEU command and control capability to geographic combatant commands (GCC). Additionally, this paper will explore which existing commands can command and control two or more aggregated MEUs, so that the US Marine Corps can have options available for future operations. A brief examination of current US Marine Corps doctrine and guidance and existing CE capabilities will be examined in order to present multiple CE options.

In order to provide specific examples, this paper will analyze the CE structures over aggregated MEUs that supported Somalia operations during OPERATION RESTORE HOPE, Task Force 58 (TF-58) during the start of OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF), and OPERATION UNIFIED RESPONSE (OUR) in Haiti. These three case studies present operations that provide different aggregated MEU command and control practices, but OUR provides an example of what can occur if MEUs are aggregated but not under a MEB CE structure. Next, this paper will review the 1985 document *Guidelines for Compositing a MAGTF* because this document focused on compositing MEUs together instead of letting MEUs operate as adjacent forces under a single US Marine Corps CE. This 1985 document is important because it is the only US Marine Corps document that studied the composition of amphibious

MAGTFs. The current structure of regional Marine Force (MARFOR) component commands and existing MEB CEs will be discussed in order to provide a current examination of the advantages and disadvantages of using these elements as a MEB CE for aggregated MEUs. Lastly, command organizations currently able to provide a MEB CE structure to command and control aggregated MEUs for each GCC will be identified.

MAGTF Doctrine

In 1952, Congress directed the Marine Corps to be an air-ground-combined arms force. General James F. Amos, the current Commandant of the US Marine Corps, states "this integrated force known as the MAGTF has unique and incomparable warfighting capabilities, which contains organic air, ground, and logistics elements under a single command element."[1] All MAGTFs vary in size and capabilities and have a modular concept, which ensures that it can be tailored and refined as a situation refines and a mission expands or reduces. General Amos states the importance of expanding MAGTFs in the Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1 (MCDP 1-0) Operations:

> A key feature of the MAGTF is its expandability. Crisis response may require a larger force than what can initially be brought to bear. Being able to expand the original force—rather than replacing it with a larger one—promotes continuity of operations. The MAGTF's modular structure facilitates rapid expansion into a larger force as a situation demands by simply adding forces as needed to the core units of each existing element.[2]

Appendix 1 illustrates the types of MAGTF organizations that can be tailored and expanded up to a Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) level, but the diagram does not portray what happens when two MAGTFs aggregate to support an operation. Since MAGTFs are independent structures, aggregated MAGTFs result in two independent forces with an internal CE but no CE to command and control the aggregated force.

Marine Expeditionary Units provide a continuous forward presence that can rapidly react to a crisis and support five key tasks that the US Marine Corps is required to conduct. Once embarked on naval amphibious shipping, MEUs form a portion of an amphibious readiness group (ARG) that can support a variety of tasks. General Amos also states "the ARG/MEU may also be called upon to support major operations and campaigns in a variety of ways, such as enabling the introduction of other forces, acting as the lead echelon for expansion to a larger formation, or providing the geographic combatant commander an inherently mobile and flexible sea-based reserve."[3] There are seven standing MEUs; six are rotational while another is permanently forward deployed.[4] Although MEUs typically act as a stand-alone force or as part of a joint task force (JTF), MEUs can aggregate to conduct larger operations. However, the table identified in Appendix 1 does not illustrate what size of force is created when two or more MEUs are aggregated together, nor does doctrine or service level guidance discuss this. A doctrinal gap exists since this table does not illustrate the force size aggregated MEUs create and what type or size of CE is required for an aggregated MEU scenario.

Although standing MEBs were disestablished in the 1990s,[5] MEBs can provide the US Marine Corps a crisis response capability that can be built upon. General Amos states "MEBs provide building blocks for forcible entry and other power projection operations, providing landing forces for amphibious assault and fly in echelon (FIE) that marry up with equipment and supplies delivered by prepositioned stocks."[6] A MEB can conduct the full range of expeditionary operations and may serve as the lead echelon of a MEF. United States Marine Corps Combat Development Command (MCCDC) states "MEBs provide the landing force building blocks for larger operations, and when combined, two MEB assault echelons constitute the assault echelon of a MEF."[7] At the command level, a MEB is commanded by a general officer, so the CE can

form the foundation of a joint or multinational task force headquarters, and it operates within the operational level of war. Although current doctrine does not address the aggregation of MEUs and the use of a MEB CE to command and control them, the command structure of amphibious forces is outlined in a concept paper.

Current Guidelines for Compositing MEUs

A 1985 Advanced Amphibious Study Group Concept Paper resulted in a document called *Guidelines for forming a Composite MAGTF*, which remains the non-doctrinal direction in which aggregated MEUs can be formed and commanded. Currently, MEUs are doctrinally the same although commander's discretion, mission requirements, and geographical nuances may create slight differences between the three geographic areas MEUs deploy from. The concept paper broke the composition of MAGTFs into three phases: expansion, integration, and constitution, which are illustrated in Appendix 2 and further explained in Appendix 3.

Throughout the transition phases, the document lists four governing principles that must be adhered to but still apply with an addition of a MEB CE. First, unity of command is critical to ensure a coordinated effort. Colonel James J. Stewart, 1985 Director of the Advanced Amphibious Study Group, states "the requirement to deal with higher headquarters from a single perspective dictate that the composite MAGTF Commander be named early and designated at the same time as the primary MAGTF Commander exercises overall command."[8] Unfortunately, this guideline maintains the perspective that MEUs will be broken apart and a MEU Commander may exercise command and control and overall command of the composited MEUs. However, he addresses the requirement that a MAGTF Commander must be able to deal with higher headquarters and this should be done from a single perspective and appointed as early as possible.

The second governing principle is that a primary or base MAGTF must be selected. The essence of this principle is that the primary or base MAGTF decides who will command the composited sub-elements of the MEUs and establish the key relationships between the Commander Amphibious Task Force (CATF) and Commander Landing Force (CLF). What is not mentioned is the requirement to coordinate operational-level support, execute campaign planning, and conduct planning with the intent to issue subordinate element operations orders, which the CE is responsible for.

The last two governing principles are that geography and future intentions will affect the degree of integration and the operational environment will affect the rate of transition. Essentially, the operating area, distance, and enemy situation impact the duration of the transition period. This is why aggregated MEUs should be left as independent adjacent forces operating under a single MEB CE, which would fall under a Joint Force Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC) in a joint operation. Although the concept paper focuses on compositing MEUs into a single force, the Study Group understood the requirement of the Commander to coordinate with higher headquarters, so the selected MEU Commander would no longer command his MEU--he would command the entire composited force.

Command and Control of Amphibious MAGTFs

The US Marine Corps' Title X responsibility is to man, train, and equip forces for employment by combatant commanders. When amphibious MAGTFs deploy, they transit through and operate within a GCC's area of responsibility (AOR), which are identified in Appendix 4. Within each GCC, the services have regional component commands, which provide a layer of command within the GCC's AOR. Admiral M. J. Mullen, the Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff in 2009, states "the functional component commander will normally exercise

operational control (OPCON) over that commander's parent service forces and tactical control (TACON) over Service's forces made available for tasking."[9] When a MAGTF deploys from its home station, the US Marine Corps maintains OPCON through six service component regional commands. For example, a US Marine Corps service component commander will provide operational-level coordination, support, and maintain Title X responsibilities of that MAGTF for the duration of the deployment in their respective GCC AOR. Specifically, Marine Forces Pacific (MARFORPAC) has this responsibility in the Pacific Command (PACOM) AOR while Marine Forces Africa (MARFORAF) has this responsibility in the Africa Command (AFRICOM) AOR. When an amphibious MAGTF transits from one GCC to another, OPCON of that MAGTF transfers to that respective GCC's regional Marine Force (MARFOR) component command.

Command and control of a MAGTF is outlined in US Marine Corps doctrine. For example, General James T. Conway, the Commandant of the US Marine Corps in 2009 states "when the GCC conducts operations using Service components, the USMC component command should have OPCON over all assigned or attached forces. If the GCC conducts operations using functional components, the Marine Corps component command normally delegates TACON to the functional component command."[10] Within this construct, the US Marine Corps will never lose OPCON of a MAGTF. However, once forces are embarked aboard amphibious shipping, they fall under the OPCON of the respective numbered US Naval Fleet assigned to a GCC's AOR because the naval forces belong to a numbered fleet.

Operational tasking from a GCC to an embarked MEU or MEB will filter through the respective numbered fleet while the MARFOR component command provides Title X support. Under these circumstances, the commanding officer of a MEU/MEB and the commander of the

naval force will have a supporting/supported relationship, and the regional MARFOR component command is generally in an administrative support role. The regional MARFOR component command will continue to coordinate service specific support and execute remaining designated authorities inherent to their command and control designation. Throughout joint and US Marine Corps doctrine, command and control of aggregated MEUs is not addressed but several case studies present different options for identifying who could form a CE over two or more aggregated MEUs, how the command relationships could be constructed, and why a CE is critical when MEUs are aggregated.

Each of the historical cases will be evaluated to identify the advantages a MEB CE can provide to an aggregated MEU operation, but the final case study will identify the consequences of not employing a MEB CE into an aggregated MEU scenario. To this end, these case studies will prove the importance of using a MEB CE in an aggregated MEU operation.

OPERATION CONTINUE HOPE

OPERATION CONTINUE HOPE demonstrates the MEB CE role during an operation in which MEUs are aggregated for a single operation and the importance of maintaining amphibious command and control continuity.

Between February and March 1994, MEUs aggregated off the coast of Somalia to support the last critical steps of OPERATION CONTINUE HOPE. Over the course of several weeks, the 11th MEU Special Operations Capable (SOC), the 13th MEU (SOC), the 22nd MEU (SOC), and the 24th MEU (SOC) aggregated together at different times under a single CE to perform combat and humanitarian operations and support the amphibious withdrawal of the last remaining forces in Somalia. The first two MEUs aggregated together were the 13th MEU (SOC) and the 22nd MEU (SOC). With two MEUs in the same area of operations (AO) supporting the same

operation, the US Marine Corps assigned a general officer to command the forces. Gary Ohl, author of the Naval War College's Somalia report "Somalia...from the Sea," explained how General Richard F. Vercauteren organized a CE over two aggregated MEUs:

> Brigadier General Richard F. Vercauteren—who also commanded the 1st Marine Expeditionary Brigade in Hawaii—was a logical choice, because of his extensive experience on the African continent and particularly in Somalia. Vercauteren collected an ad hoc staff from various sources and joined Admiral Dantone on board USS Abraham Lincoln, from where he helped coordinate Marine activities ashore and afloat. One of Vercauteren's immediate problems involved the organization of the Marine forces then assembling off the coast of Mogadishu. At that time, the Marine Corps had decided to phase out MEBs. For this reason, and because ARGs and MEUs would rotate in and out of the Somalia station at irregular times, Vercauteren decided not to restructure the two MEUs into a MEB configuration. They would continue to function as separate organizations.[11]

Although Vercauteren performed the role of Commander Marine Forces Somalia, which was the CE over the 13th MEU (SOC) and 22nd MEU (SOC), he was also appointed as the CLF. Towards the middle of February 1994, the 24th MEU (SOC) and the 11th MEU (SOC) replaced the 22nd MEU (SOC) and the 13th MEU (SOC); the two new MEUs fell under the command of Vercauteren and remained two separate amphibious MAGTFs. Appendix 5 illustrates the command relationships during this period of OPERATION CONTINUE HOPE. Although this operation and aggregated MEU case study occurred nearly twenty years ago, there are vital lessons that remain relevant to forming a CE over two or more aggregated MEUs.

If the US Marine Corps did not appoint a general officer to form a CE, several issues would have to be addressed.

- First, who would be the senior Marine Commander in charge of all US Marine Forces?
- Second, as MEUs rotated in and out of Somalia, how could the US Marine Corps and the JTF maintain command and control continuity throughout the operation?
- Third, who would be appointed as the CLF as MEUs rotated in and out?

- Fourth, who would ensure that MEUs were being best employed within their organic capabilities without having to explain what a MEU is to a JTF?
- Fifth, who of equal rank would coordinate CLF and CATF responsibilities with a Navy Admiral?

By appointing Vercauteren and a MEB CE to perform this function, these dilemmas were prevented.

By bringing in a separate CE to oversee the US Marine Corps' portion of the operations in Somalia, a senior general officer was in charge of all US Marine Forces. So, he could provide continuity throughout the duration of the operation, and he could be appointed as the CLF, which was equal to the status/rank of the CATF. Most importantly, Vercauteren, as a Marine Corps Officer, knew what MEUs were, how to employ them, and what capabilities and limitations they had. If Vercauteren or another US Marine general officer were not appointed these duties, one of the MEU Commanders would have most likely filled these responsibilities.

During the final stages of Somalia operations, the MEUs were only supporting the operation for a few weeks at a time. By appointing a MEU Commander, continuity would not have been established, and the MEU Commander would have been equal rank to the adjacent MEU. Second, the MEU Commander, and by default his staff, would have been challenged to command and control subordinate forces while focusing on operational level issues and tasks, coordinating with the CATF, and coordinating with the JTF Commander. Although a MEU Commander and his CE could perform this function as a single MEU, the addition of a second MEU complicates the command arrangement significantly when conducting simultaneous operations or when under the arrangement of a JTF or multinational (MNL) force.

Since Vercauteren was the current commander of 1st MEB, he understood a higher level of CE staff requirements and did not have to learn these responsibilities while concurrently conducting operations. Additionally, the US Marine Corps did not have a forward postured CE or organization that was familiar with the AO or had existing relationships within the GCC, which is why Vercauteren and the 1st MEB CE was deployed to Somalia. The aggregation of MEUs during OPERATION COMFORT HOPE provided several lessons that remain relevant today, and the command and control structure of the MEUs was a positive event.

Task Force-58

TF-58 will demonstrate the integration of a forward deployed MEB CE into an aggregated MEU operation, the importance of maintaining a small MEB CE staff, and the importance of ensuring MEUs focus on tactical-level execution instead of operational-level functions.

Following the events of 9/11, the US Marine Corps, 5th Fleet, and Central Command (CENTCOM) aggregated two MEUs to conduct operations into and throughout Afghanistan; these operations were launched from the Indian Ocean. Although the 15th MEU (SOC) and the 26th MEU (SOC) were independent units with the capability to conduct independent operations, CENTCOM and 5th Fleet foresaw a need to have a headquarters element over two potentially independent forces.

During this period, 1st MEB, commanded by Brigadier General (BGen) James N. Mattis was conducting a bi-lateral exercise in Egypt when Vice Admiral (VADM) Willie Moore summoned him to 5th Fleet headquarters in Bahrain; Moore appointed Mattis as Commander of TF-58 and was subsequently placed in charge of all amphibious operations supporting the task force. Mattis's initial mission was to execute amphibious raids into Southern Afghanistan while commanding US Navy and Marine units. The TF-58 Staff states in their *Unclassified*

Documents from Marine Task Force 58's Operations in Afghanistan that "Admiral Moore played a critical role in defining command relationships...by designating General Mattis as the sole commander of TF-58. By doing so, Admiral Moore entrusted...the PELELIU and BATAAN ARGs to a Marine Corps BGen."[12] This command relationship, illustrated in Appendix 6, was not traditional since amphibious forces typically fall under the OPCON of the Naval Fleet and subsequently under a Naval Commander. However, Colonel Nathan Lowery, who authored *US Marines in Afghanistan 2001-2002 (From the Sea)*, states why a US Marine Corps General was appointed to command an amphibious task force:

> Moore placed Mattis in charge of all amphibious forces in theater and designated him commander of Naval Expeditionary TF-58. This decision may have been partially influenced by the notion of combining existing amphibious forces under a small headquarters staff (given space constraints in Bahrain) as opposed to pursuing a more traditional configuration involving multi-ship brigades, large support staffs, and command and control vessels, which at the time, was a plan that was reportedly being developed by I MEF in Camp Pendleton. Moore was exercising his responsibility to ensure the unity of command and effort by organizing the amphibious force to best support his concept of operations.[13]

As a result, the 15th MEU (SOC) and 26th MEU (SOC) were not combined into a single brigade; they were left as two independent autonomous amphibious forces with a supported/supporting relationship under a single US Marine Corps CE.

Moore saw several advantages concerning the command and control relationship he established. Moore's primary concern was ensuring unity of effort while conducting operations hundreds of miles inland by two different MEUs. Lowrey further explains what Moore considered when developing this command relationship:

> Moore's duty was to define the most logical command relationship based on anticipated mission requirements, which he did by drawing from a wide range of potential configurations, some derived from Service considerations and others from functional requirements. In this particular case, inland raids with no coastal threat, the preferred doctrinal arrangement was for the amphibious task force commander to support the landing force commander. Moreover, because Moore

> intended to combine two ready groups into a single amphibious task force, putting a Marine flag officer in charge was advantageous, particularly if the assignment involved coordinating ground combat operations with special operations forces and the Northern Alliance.[14]

Moore understood that a US Marine Corps flag officer was the preferred choice over a Navy flag officer. Since 5th Fleet had OPCON of TF-58, there would be a plethora of naval influence on operations, but the knowledge of employing MEUs to inland objectives was limited and best served by a US Marine ground force commander. Moreover, Moore knew that space limitations in Bahrain and aboard amphibious shipping would limit the size of this staff, so he did not want a standard brigade size staff that Mattis already commanded.

Due to the numbers of meetings and pre-operational conversations, Mattis understood Moore's intent and the limitations he faced, so he created his TF-58 Staff from his 1st MEB CE staff. To mitigate personnel space limitations, Mattis initially envisioned a staff of approximately 25-30 members, but a small staff requires certain types of personnel to provide the same functions as a larger staff. The TF-58 staff peaked at forty but settled at thirty-two, which included liaison officers from other services and agencies. Lowrey states "Mattis wanted a small group of forward leaning officers who possessed operational experience, initiative, and sound judgment. He kept his staff small both out of personal predilection and in recognition of realities imposed by seabased facilities."[15] Mattis's staff and CE provided the 15th MEU (SOC) and 26th MEU (SOC) operational support by creating and issuing future plans, target lists, and mission type operation orders. Also, the TF-58 CE coordinated service specific requirements with Marine Forces Central Command (MARCENT) who was ordered to deploy from Tampa, Florida to Bahrain in order to provide in-theater component level command and control. This command and control arrangement, which is also illustrated in Appendix 6, supported Mattis'

strategy of "centralized planning and decentralized execution," which left the MEUs able to concentrate on tactical-level execution.

The command and control relationship developed by Moore and Mattis was critical to the success of TF-58's missions. Similar to the MEU aggregation concept used in the latter stages of OPERATION CONTINUE HOPE, a US Marine Corps flag officer CE was developed and interjected to command and control an operation that included aggregated MEUs. The flag officer, Mattis, concurrently commanded a MEB (just like Vercauteren), so he understood the requirements of a higher level staff and the functions this staff had to perform and coordinate between CENTCOM, 5th Fleet, MARCENT, and other adjacent commands; this enabling function allowed the MEUs to focus on tactical-level planning and execution under a CE that understood how MEUs were best employed. Furthermore, the small CE staff was not a hindrance to the MEUs because they did not embark aboard their amphibious ships and further crowd existing spaces afloat. However, they had the flexibility to rapidly deploy themselves from Bahrain to critical command and control nodes throughout CENTCOM--to include sites within Afghanistan where the MEUs conducted operations. Lowrey quotes Colonel Waldhauser (15th MEU (SOC) Commanding Officer) as saying "the big thing that 58 did for us was to define our mission."[16]

This case study illustrates the success and procedures of how a forward deployed MEB CE Staff's force structure was used to build an ad-hoc flag officer CE to command and control aggregated MEUs during a single operation. Since MARCENT was not forward deployed and 1st MEB CE was, 1st MEB CE provided an immediate option since they were forward positioned in CENTCOM. Task Force-58's command structure, which was sourced primarily from the 1st

MEB CE, provides a sound example of how and who can command and control aggregated MEUs.

OPERATION UNIFIED RESPONSE

This case study will demonstrate the consequences of not employing a MEB CE into an aggregated MEU operation. Unlike OPERATION CONTINUE HOPE and TF-58, OUR did not employ a MEB CE to command and control aggregated MEUs.

OPERATION UNIFIED RESPONSE was the name for the humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR) response in Haiti following a 7.0 magnitude earthquake in January 2010. The disaster occurred in the Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) AOR, and the 22nd MEU and 24th MEU were tasked to support HA/DR operations. Although thousands of US forces directly participated in OUR, the US Marine Corps' contribution was the 22nd MEU and the 24th MEU.

The first challenge SOUTHCOM faced was the construction of their response force. Southern Command looked at US Marine Corps and US Army options to form the JTF Headquarters. The United States Joint Forces Command Joint Center for Operational Analysis states "II MEF was unavailable due to commitments for CENTCOM, so Army South (ARSOUTH) appeared to be the logical choice as they had been 'certified' as a JTF capable headquarters."[17] Joint Task Force-Haiti (JTF-H) was built around the US Army 82nd Airborne Division Staff. Since a US Army command would be the JTF-H headquarters, they would need forces since SOUTHCOM did not have any assigned forces and did not have a contingency plan for a Haiti earthquake HA/DR operation. As a result, the USS Carl Vinson, the 22nd MEU, the 24th MEU, and their associated ARGs, were the initial naval building blocks of the JTF. The USS Carl Vinson carrier task force was designated the JFMCC, which was under TACON of JTF-H. The 22nd MEU and 24th MEU were designated under TACON to the JFMCC but

remained under the OPCON to Marine Forces South (MARFORSOUTH). This command relationship is illustrated in Appendix 7. Although two MEUs were aggregated under a JFMCC to support OUR, a US Marine Corps CE was not sourced to command and control the two MEUs, and neither MEU was appointed as the "senior MEU" or in command of the other or all Marine forces.

Since a US Marine Corps CE was not sourced to command and control the two MEUs, several problems surfaced within a US Army JTF and with the carrier task force JFMCC. First, JTF-H and the JFMCC were not knowledgeable with MEU capabilities or the best way to utilize them, which led to hesitation to use the MEUs and prevented them from being employed effectively during the early stages of OUR. The 24th MEU's after action report states "extensive use of liaison officers, which degraded the MEU's organic staff, and numerous capability briefs and documents had to be created to inform JTF-H and the JFMCC about our capabilities."[18] Since there was not a single CE over the two MEUs, the MEUs had to devote liaison officers and coordination efforts to operational-level organizations and were not able to solely focus on tactical-level planning and execution. The US Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) states "because the JTF-H staff initially conceived that Marine Corps units were going to operate from forward bases ashore, in similar fashion to the 82d Airborne Division and as they did in Iraq and Afghanistan, conflicting directives were given to the Navy that did not address that the two organizations operated in consonance with one another."[19]

Once JTF-H staff understood the command relationships of the MEUs under the JFMCC, they directed tasks through the JFMCC instead of straight to the MEUs. Because the MEUs did not have a MAGTF CE over them, the employment of two different MEUs was the responsibility of the carrier task force/JFMCC. This arrangement also encountered early friction. The MCCLL

also states “this unfamiliarity led to less than optimal utilization of the MEUs until the headquarters staff and commanders were provided with MEU generated smart books detailing capacities and capabilities.”[20] The lack of a MEB CE to command and control and work operational-level issues led to initial challenges for the MEUs, but MARFORSOUTH did not have the force structure to provide a CE organization for the two MEUs.

Although MARFORSOUTH helped coordinate the proper command relationship of the MEUs with several operational-level OUR organizations, they did not have the manpower to form a separate CE over the two MEUs. The MCCLL further explains that “MARFORSOUTH is an economy of force MARFOR and is undermanned for an event of this magnitude. Considerable augmentation was required, especially as it assumed operational control of all Marine forces in the joint operating area (JOA).”[21] Marine Forces South is a small MARFOR because there are no permanent US Marine Corps forces assigned to SOUTHCOM. Since MARFORSOUTH required augmentation to perform their component responsibilities during OUR, a CE could only have been sourced from an existing US Marine Corps command within the US. As a result, a CE was not sourced or requested.

OPERATION UNIFIED RESPONSE provides a different approach towards MEU aggregation command and control, which proved to complicate the initial execution of support in Haiti. Since MARFORSOUTH did not have the force structure to provide a CE organization over the MEUs, an outside organization would have been needed. During this period, II MEF was not available to provide the JTF Headquarters, so they could not have provided a CE headquarters either. The lack of a CE led to the 22nd MEU and the 24th MEU working as two independent elements, supporting two different AOs, under a headquarters that was unfamiliar with MEUs. However, a MEB CE structure over the two MEUs would have enabled the MEUs

to focus on tactical-level execution and planning because the MEB CE would have been the operational-level structure that coordinated with MARFORSOUTH, the JFMCC, JTF-H, and translated higher level orders into tactical level operation orders. The MEB CE could also have provided the liaison officer function and personnel to higher and adjacent organizations, which would have kept the MEU staffs focused on MEU-level operations. Moreover, MARFORSOUTH would only have coordinated component requirements with a single command instead of two independent MEUs. A MEB CE could have determined priority of support, ensured unity of effort, and designated a supported/supporting relationship between the 22nd MEU and the 24th MEU. Instead, the MEUs were left as two independent forces operating under organizations that were not knowledgeable with MEUs, which led to issues during the initial stages of the HA/DR operations; the initial stages of an HA/DR operation are typically the most vital. Although OUR was a successful operation, the amphibious command and control structure provides an area that requires analysis and improvements for future aggregated MEU operations.

The Need for a Command Element to Command and Control Aggregated MEUs

This section will state the requirement for a CE to command and control aggregated MEUs. The historical case studies and US Marine Corps doctrine will provide the focal point for analyzing the advantages of using a MEB CE structure to provide command and control over aggregated MEUs. The gap between an amphibious MEB and a MEU is a critical link because if an operation initially requires aggregated MEUs, and escalates into a MEB requirement, the initial addition of a MEB CE will reduce the amount of friction during the force increase.

Marine Expeditionary Units operate independently under the OPCON of a Naval Fleet, but once MEUs are aggregated, CE requirements change. Regardless whether aggregated MEUs are

OPCON or TACON to a Naval Fleet or JTF, the dynamics of multiple MEUs require a MEB CE to command and control them. United States Marine Corps Operations (MCDP 1-0) explains how smaller MAGTFs form building blocks for a larger MAGTF to build from, which can make reorganization easier. The aggregation of two or more MEUs can establish the foundation for a MEB; the only lacking function is a MEB CE. Since MEUs are the smallest standing MAGTF and are followed by a MEB in size and capability, the aggregation of MEUs and the addition of a CE results in a MEB like structure. However, doctrine does not address this concept, but aggregated MEUs need a MEB CE to bridge the gap between operational and tactical-level operations and support; the facts to support this claim are nested in the three historical case studies.

A MEB CE, brought from forces external to the MEUs, can perform operational-level planning and coordination with higher headquarters, adjacent forces, and the regional MARFOR component commands. Regional MARFOR component commands should not coordinate US Marine Corps issues with several MEUs; they should coordinate with a single MEB CE that can channel operational level planning, requirements, and support to the tactical level focused MEU. Since a MEB CE was not integrated into OUR, the 22nd MEU and 24th MEU had to explain how they should be employed instead of immediately providing HA/DR support because the MEUs were working for a US Army centric JTF Staff and a carrier task force JFMCC. In another example, TF-58's CE, as stated by the 15th MEU (SOC) Commander, Colonel Waldhauser, clarified the MEU's purpose and bridged the gap between tactical execution and operational level planning and support requirements. During Somalia, the 1st MEB CE provided command and control, CLF functions, and continuity during a period in which four MEUs cycled in and

out of the operation; incoming MEUs entered an operation with an established command and control structure, which enabled them to rapidly commence operations.

Additionally, since a US Marine Corp general officer commands a MEB CE structure, he/she understands a MEU's capability and the best way to employ them. This construct was evident in OPERATION CONTINUE HOPE and TF-58. This general officer would also coordinate with other service and multinational flag officers on an equal playing field. Moreover, since MEUs are self-sustaining for fifteen days, the MEB CE can coordinate and prioritize sustainment of the MEUs with the regional MARFOR component commands or adjacent forces. Since aggregated MEUs will compete for theater-level resources, the MEB CE can validate and prioritize the use of allocated theater resources by determining which MEU is the priority for service, joint, or multinational support. Standing or active MEB CEs train and perform these different roles and do not require a "steep learning curve" once they arrive in theater, but they would need to establish relationships and provide a seamless friction free transition for the MEUs. Lastly, aggregated MEUs should be left to develop and execute tactical level plans and not focus on higher-level issues that can be solved or worked with a MEB CE structure operating within the operational level of war. These points were proven in the OPERATION CONTINUE HOPE and TF-58 case studies while OUR demonstrated that the absence of a MEB CE required MEUs to work within the operational and tactical-levels.

Without a MEB CE, the aggregated MEU's staff members would work the same issues as the adjacent MEU(s). For example, each of the aggregated MEU S-4s will have to coordinate with the regional MARFOR for service specific logistics support, and the MARFORs will have to coordinate that support with each of the MEUs. However, the addition of a MEB CE will enable the MEU S-4s to focus on tactical-level logistics with the MEB CE G-4, and the regional

MARFORs can focus operational-level logistics with the MEB CE G-4 instead of multiple MEUs. In this example, the MARFOR G-4, Naval Fleet N-4, and a JTF J-4 will inherit the same situation. A MEB CE will bridge the operational/tactical level seam that is created when multiple MEUs are aggregated together. In the OUR case study, sustainment was not discussed, but without a MEB CE to coordinate and prioritize operational level support, MARFORSOUTH had to prioritize service level support, and the JFMCC had to prioritize theater level support for two MEUs that lacked a MEB CE.

The MEB CE must be integrated into operations and the task organization as soon as the JTF or command structure is established in order to mitigate any operational distractions or impact to operations. For example, the TF-58 CE (1st MEB) was already forward deployed in CENTCOM, so the elements of the initial TF-58 CE staff were already mobilized and within the same GCC. Also, this staff was integrated into the OEF command structure prior to the beginning of MEU operations, so there was no disruption to operations and a relationship was already established with CENTCOM and MARCENT; this was possible because 1st MEB was executing a CENTCOM exercise in theater. Although it was coincidence that that TF-58 occurred shortly after 1st MEB arrived in CENTCOM for the exercise, the coincidence demonstrates the importance that forward deployed MEB CEs can have, so they can be incorporated into operations seamlessly and rapidly. Also, the decision to use the 1st MEB CE to command and control aggregated MEUs and all Marine forces during OPERATION CONTINUE HOPE stemmed from the fact that 1st MEB CE was active and available to support the entire length of the operation. Forward deployed MEB CEs, regional MARFOR components, and standing MEB CEs present different options for GCC's and the US Marine Corps to choose from when

determining what US Marine Corps organization is best positioned, organized, and prepared to command and control aggregated MEUs.

MEB CEs that can Command and Control Aggregated MEUs

There are numerous methods of forming a MEB CE to command and control aggregated MEUs, but the case studies and the contemporary environment demonstrate that a forward deployed and standing organization is best suited to fill this role. Based upon these requirements, aggregated MEUs can be commanded by a MEU Commander, the regional MARFOR component, one of the three standing MEB CEs, or a MEU CE with the global response force (GRF) mission; these units are standing organizations with geographic AORs. Each of these options present their own unique advantages and disadvantages, but provide available options based on the US Marine Corps' current force structure and geographic positioning. Appendix 8 provides a summary of these options.

Currently, the US Marine Corps has three standing MEB CEs that can provide aggregated MEUs a MEB CE for command and control purposes. Based upon the Fall 2010 Force Structure Review, the US Marine Corps planned to organize and form five regionally based MEB CEs that would have a habitual relationship with their naval counterparts; this plan was developed to reduce response times and create efficiency during task organization. General Amos states "these five MEB CEs would enable response to most likely missions while preserving the capability to project punishing combat power to support a joint force commander's diverse requirements."[22] However, based on further force structure limitations, MEB CEs were altered. The 1st MEB CE will no longer be a permanent core headquarters element, so I MEF/1st MEB CE staffs are embedded within each other. The 2nd MEB CE reached initial operational capable (IOC) in November 2012 and will be fully operationally capable (FOC) in October 2015. At this

time, the 2nd MEB CE will be a permanent core headquarters element. The 3rd MEB CE is FOC and has been regularly deployed within the PACOM AOR, but 4th MEB, intended for MARFORAF will no longer be established. 5th MEB, now called Marine Forces Central Command Forward (MARCENT FWD), was recently assessed as JTF capable, is FOC, and may be re-designated as a numbered MEB CE in the future since MARCENT FWD does not provide component level support to Marine forces in CENTCOM.

Out of the three active MEBs, only 3rd MEB is forward positioned in their respective GCC, which narrows their focus down to specific areas, plans, and reduces their mobility response time. However, the US Marine Corps' 35th Commandant's Service Campaign Plan dictates geographic areas that I MEF, II MEF, and III MEF will focus on; these are annotated in Appendix 8 as areas of potential MEB CE employment for aggregated MEU operations.

Some advantages and disadvantages of using each MEB CE are also displayed in Appendix 8. Within these advantages and disadvantages, the 2nd MEB CE stands out as a potential single source to command and control all aggregated MEU scenarios. A logical solution is to focus the 2nd MEB CE on aggregated MEU scenarios while the 1st MEB CE and 3rd MEB CE focus on MPF operations. The recent elimination of an entire MPF Squadron left II MEF without a dedicated squadron. Since 2nd MEB no longer has an MPF task, this previous task could be replaced with a task to command and control aggregated MEUs. If 2nd MEB CE was solely given this task, they would have to focus on all six GCCs. Since 1st MEB and 3rd MEB have dedicated MPF Squadrons, 1st MEB and 3rd MEB could focus on MPF operations while 2nd MEB could focus on the command and control of aggregated MEUs. Personal interviews with an officer from each MEB CE resulted in one common limitation:

- Each MEB CE cannot command and control aggregated MEUs while preparing to or conducting simultaneous MPF operations.

Appendix 10, which provides MEB CE choices for each GCC to command and control aggregated MEUs, focuses heavily on the 2nd MEB CE.

Regional MARFOR component commands were created to satisfy a requirement stemming from the 1986 Goldwater Nichols Act and have been established to provide US Marine Corps operational-level planning, coordination, and support to MAGTFs operating within a respective GCC. The command relationship of these regional MARFORs is shown in Appendix 9. General Conway states "their (regional MARFORs) primary responsibility is that of a force provider and sustainer."[23] The principle tasks for the regional MARFORs are to execute OPCON of attached US Marine Corps forces and to advise the GCC Commander and other Service Component Commanders on the proper employment of MAGTFs or other US Marine forces. General Conway further explains states "the...headquarters is manned primarily by permanently assigned personnel who are augmented by additional personnel from sources throughout the Marine Corps during operational commitments and times of war."[24] Of the US Marine Corps' six regional MARFORs, five of them do not have the ability to maintain component responsibilities while simultaneously sourcing a MEB CE for an aggregated MEU scenario.

Within five of the regionally based MARFORs, there is a lack of sufficient force structure to construct and form a separate stand alone CE while simultaneously supporting the component level responsibility. Marine Forces Africa, MARFORSOUTH, and MARCENT are not forward positioned in their assigned GCC, but MARFORPAC, MARFOR Europe (MARFOREUR), and MARFOR North (MARFORNORTH) operate within their specific GCC. With the exception of MARFORPAC, these regional MARFORs are considered "economy of force" headquarters,

which aligns with the guidance in Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-40.8 (Marine Corps Componency); this also restricts the commands to staff functions only. Although the US Marine Corps established a Crisis Augmentation Cell (CAC) in 2010 to augment regional MARFORs in times of a crisis, the augmentation and subsequent formation of a MEB CE to command and control aggregated MEUs will leave MEUs in a longer period without a MEB CE structure. Within European Command (EUCOM), AFRICOM, Northern Command (NORTHCOM), and SOUTHCOM AORs, a MEB CE to command and control aggregated MEUs and concurrently own battlespace must come from PACOM, CENTCOM, or the Continental United States (CONUS).

Of the six regional MARFORs, MARFORPAC can rapidly respond to a crisis with pre-established CE organizations for crises previously identified and planned for while maintaining component responsibilities. Within the PACOM GCC, MARFORPAC has fly-in staff structures ready to respond and augment an existing staff or create a foundation for a JTF Headquarters. Since MARFORPAC has I MEF and III MEF assigned to it, MARFORPAC has the capability to internally resource additional capabilities from these two MEFs. Also, when MEUs transit through PACOM, MARFORPAC has an established relationship because the MEUs, prior to deployment, fell under the control of I MEF or III MEF. A forward CE sourced from MARFORPAC understands operational-level requirements, has pre-established relationships with all forces in PACOM, and has developed and are familiar with PACOM's operational plans and the use of MEUs within each plan.

Another CE option to command and control aggregated MEUs is MARCENT FWD. Their AO is CENTCOM, but they do not have component level responsibilities. Although their direct tasking comes from MARCENT in Tampa, Florida, MARCENT FWD's focus is on small-scale

contingencies, HA/DR, theater security cooperation (TSC), and non-combatant evacuation operations (NEO). Through the use of pre-established, rehearsed, and rapidly deployable scalable CEs that can embark or fall upon any command and control location, MARCENT FWD can provide the foundation for a one-star JTF Headquarters, a Combined JTF (CJTF), or a US Marine Corps centric task force CE as the basis for a larger follow-on MAGTF. For certain scenarios, MARCENT FWD has developed augmentation capability packages that can be applied to specific operations. Since MARCENT FWD is permanently positioned in Bahrain, they have existing command relationships or coordination lines with CENTCOM, MARCENT, 5th Fleet, Navy Forces CENTCOM (NAVCENT), and MEUs that operate in the AO. Along with the CE functions MARCENT FWD can provide, they have rehearsed and can act as a CLF in amphibious operations in which a CATF/CLF is required. Within the CENTCOM AOR, MARCENT FWD is a viable ready CE option that can command and control aggregated MEUs as part of a MAGTF, MEB, JTF, etc.

The last viable option for a MEB CE structure for aggregated MEUs is to use an existing MEU CE that is currently in a post-deployment status assigned to the GRF. Marine Expeditionary Unit CEs retain the majority of their staff during the post-deployment period and may assume a GRF requirement for a short period following return to home station. In this scenario, a GRF MEU CE staff can be used as the foundation for a MEB CE. Since the MEU CE Staff is post-deployed, they may be the most familiar with amphibious operations and the employment of MEUs. Unfortunately, to ensure the post-deployed MEU Commander is not placed in command of aggregated MEUs, his staff will need to be augmented with a flag officer from the respective MEB, MEF, or a MEF subordinate command, and perhaps, additional staff members. Although a minimum of one MEU CE is always in a post-deployed status, this option

can take too long arrange and deploy because of the requirement to mobilize the augments needed to make it a MEB CE; there can also be a the lack of prior integration, training, and established procedures of the augments and the MEU CE.

The final option for a CE structure for aggregated MEUs is to use a MEU CE that is actually responding to the crisis. Since MEUs are a forward deployed presence that will be a "first responder" to any crisis, a MEU Commander can be appointed as the Commander of an aggregated MEU force. Typically, the first responding MEU will have the most knowledge of the situation, start to build command and supporting relationships, and will already have established relationships within the GCC. However, the first MEU may not have the most senior MEU Commander and may not be the MEU with the most capability. Also, a MEU's force structure is designed to interact with a Naval Fleet, three subordinate battalion/squadron sized elements, and a regional MARFOR component command. Regardless of which MEU is chosen to be the overall commander, a MEU's current force structure will have to assume additional responsibilities to coordinate plans, operations, and support for subordinate MEUs. Due to ship space limitations, space for augments will be extremely limited, so the MEU Staff will have to consume most of this responsibility with the current grade and quantity of the staff. Unless the ARG Commander is designated the CATF, the MEU Commander can be appointed the CLF and have to coordinate CATF/CLF requirements with an external commander which may be on another ship or land-based and will most likely be a Navy flag officer. Since a MEU Commander is not a flag officer, the senior Marine can't be an option to fulfill a JTF command billet. Because of these disadvantages and the OUR case study, this is the least preferred option.

Conclusion

Three amphibious MEU case studies hardly qualify as an inclusive examination of aggregated MEU command and control requirements and processes; however, they do provide two successful examples of a command and control organization, one example of an unsuccessful command and control structure, and portray the advantages that a MEB CE structure can provide to an aggregated MEU force. Based upon Somalia, TF-58, OUR, analysis from doctrinal publications, and subject matter expert input, three different viable options exist as current organizational options to provide a MEB CE structure to command and control aggregated MEUs.

Major Joe Garaux, author of a draft thesis that measures amphibious force sustainment in the Asia Pacific region, states "the current and future capacity of amphibious ships, in addition to their forward presence posture, leaves MEUs as the only MAGTF capable of conducting amphibious operations and forcible entry from the sea."[25] Based upon his research and if his thesis proves to be a fact, an entire MEB cannot embark on amphibious shipping while supporting MEU deployments, which potentially eliminates an amphibious embarked MEB. So, the aggregation of MEUs may be the only option the US Marine Corps has to conduct amphibious operations. If so, a MEB CE to command and control aggregated MEUs is paramount to provide operational level coordination, support, and potentially assemble follow-on MAGTFs into a single aggregated MAGTF.

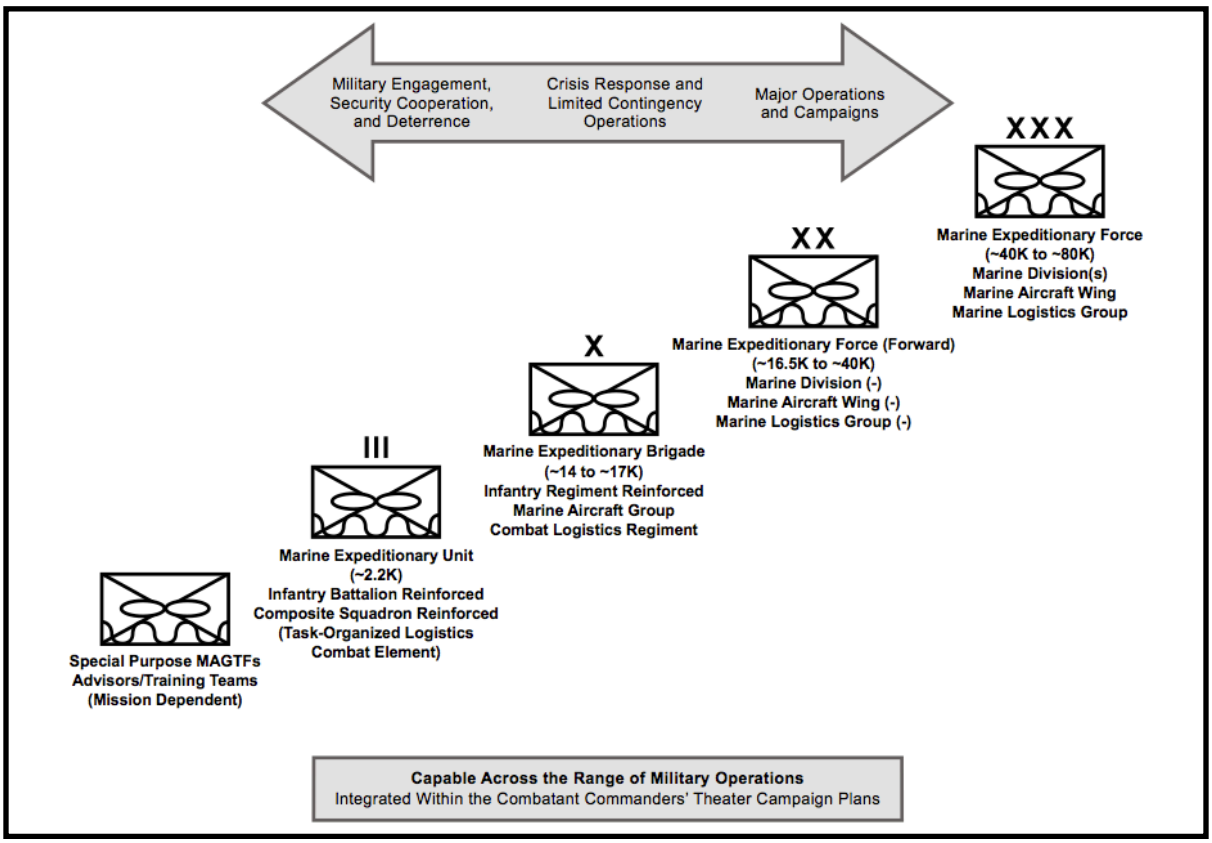
Given future force structure changes and fiscal limitations, the US Marine Corps must be innovative and look for ways to employ standing organizations to cover missions that are not ordinary. Although Appendix 8 illustrates numerous advantages and disadvantages of MARFORPAC, MARCENT FWD, and the three standing MEB CEs, these five commands can

each provide a GCC Commander and the US Marine Corps a feasible choice that cover each of the GCC's respective AOs, but the 2nd MEB CE appears to be the service-level answer to this dilemma.

These options are summarized in Appendix 10 and list the top two MEB CE choices for each GCC, but most importantly, they have the manning and structure to perform command and control functions if called upon today. Although the US Marine Corps does not have a doctrinal solution or a standing task for an organization to command and control aggregated MEUs, MARFORPAC, MARCENT FWD, the 1st MEB CE, the 2nd MEB CE, and the 3rd MEB CE are commands that can respond today to command and control aggregated MEUs, but the 2nd MEB CE stands out as the potential CE that could absorb the US Marine Corps task to command and control aggregated MEUs.

Apppendix 1

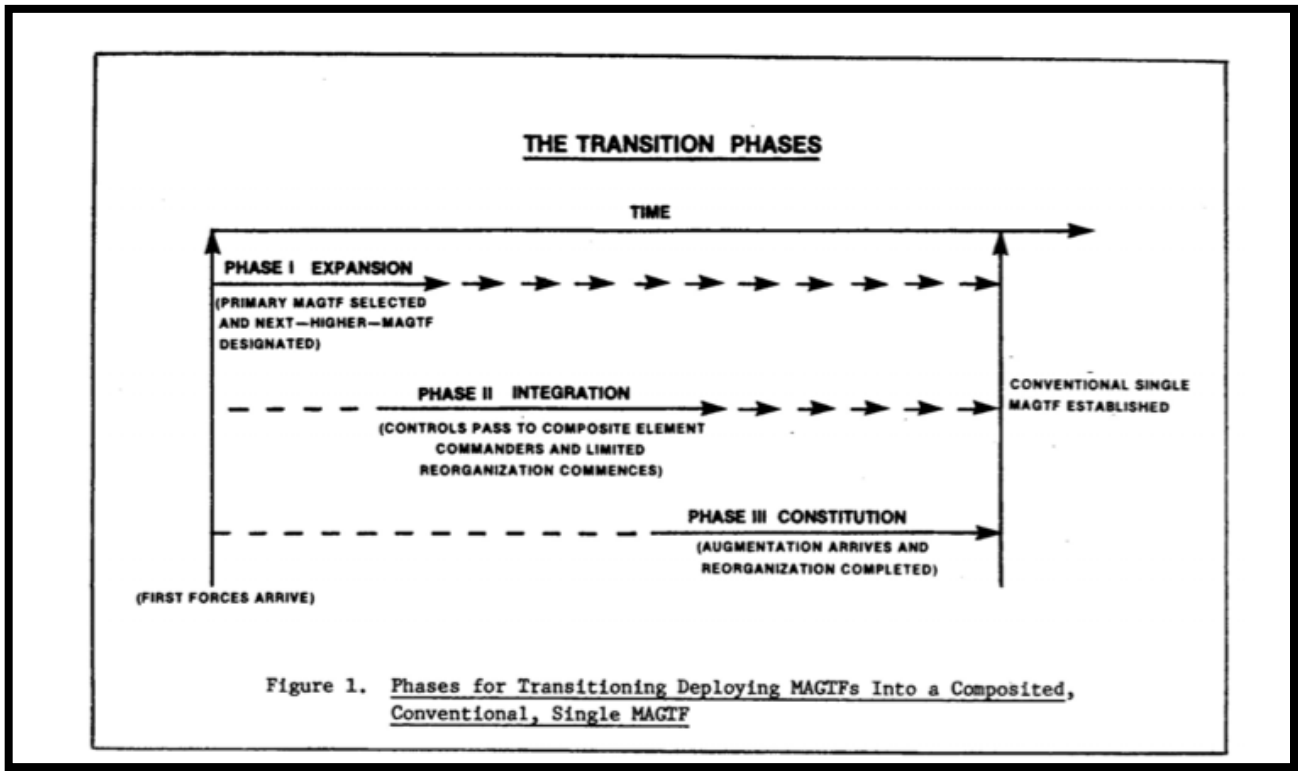
Figure 1: Types of MAGTF Organizations.



Source: Commandant of the Marine Corps. *Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1-0 Operations*, MCDP 1-0, August 9, 2011. http://www.quantico.usmc.mil/activities/?Section=CDI.

Appendix 2

Figure 2: 1985 Transition Phases for Compositing MEUs



Source: Commandant of the Marine Corps. "Advanced Amphibious Study Group Concept Paper: Guidelines for forming a Composite MAGTF." Third Edition. (1 August 1985), 8.

Appendix 3

During the expansion phase, forces remain organized and prepared to operate within the MAGTF in which they deploy in, and one of the arriving MAGTFs is selected as the primary or base MAGTF. The MAGTF Commander selected as the primary MAGTF is also appointed as Composite MAGTF Commander. In the case of MEUs, a Colonel would be placed in charge of other MEUs and Colonels when MEUs are aggregated together. This phase ends when unity of command is achieved without reorganizing the individual MAGTFs.

In the integration phase, MAGTFs are reorganized prior to any external augmentation support. The phase ends when responsibility for ground combat, aviation, and logistics is fully exercised through a single composite element command channel directly responsive to the composite MAGTF Commander. In this phase, a MEU's three subordinate elements would merge together to form composite elements. For example, a MEU's Combat Logistics Battalion (CLB) would merge with another MEU CLB to form a single reinforced CLB or Combat Logistics Regiment (CLR) (-) under a single MEU CLB Commander. This phase is based upon a "come and fight as you are," so augmentation of any external personnel or resources would not occur or be required.

Lastly, the constitution phase supports external augmentation of personnel and resources and any further reorganization of the initial individual MAGTFs. Although mobility limitations and time constraints of a short operation could impair this, a critical element of this phase is the augmentation of a C2 structure necessary to support the reorganization. The Commandant of the US Marine Corps stated that "we may deliberately choose not to reach this final point in the compositing process because of future requirements for some or all of the MAGTFs in the objective area."[26]

Source: Commandant of the Marine Corps. Advanced Amphibious Study Group Concept Paper: Guidelines for forming a Composite MAGTF. Third Edition. (1 August 1985), 4-6.

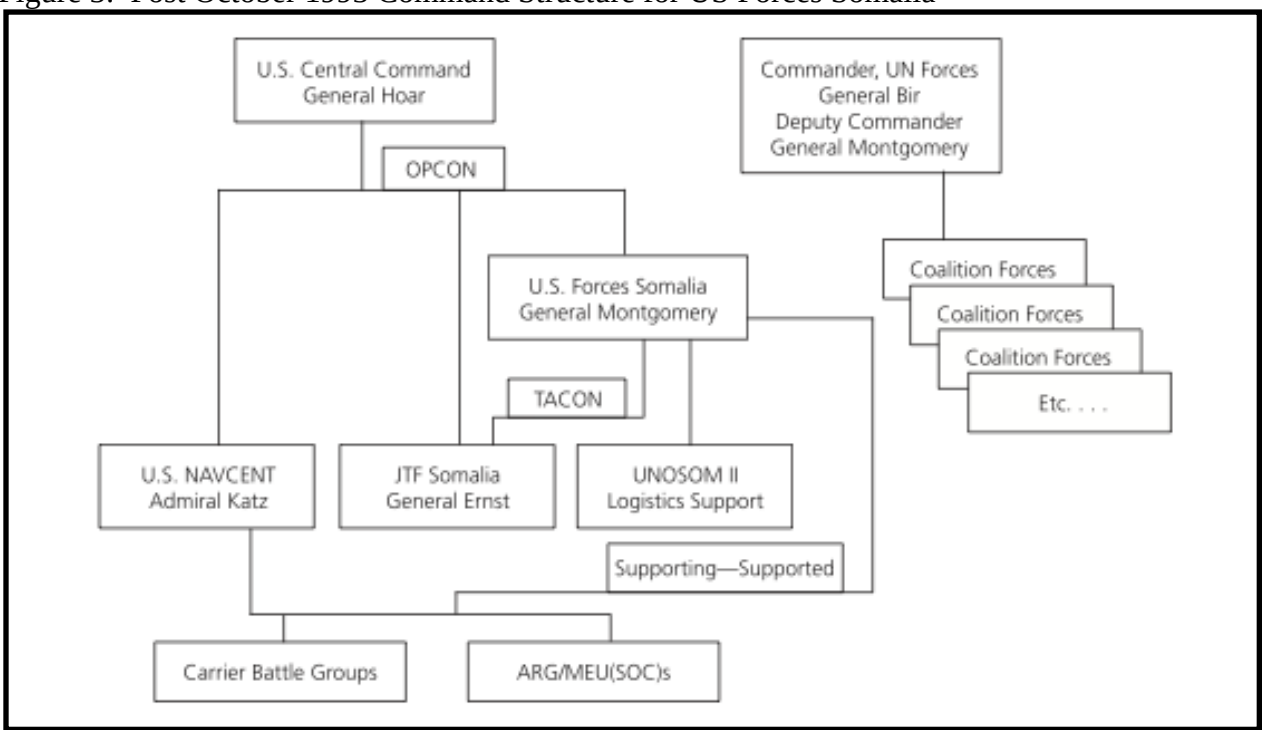
Appendix 4

Map 1: Geographic Combatant Command areas of responsibility

Source: Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy Defense Pricing. Areas of Responsibility. August 14, 2012. http://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/pacc/cc/areas_of_responsibility.html.

Appendix 5

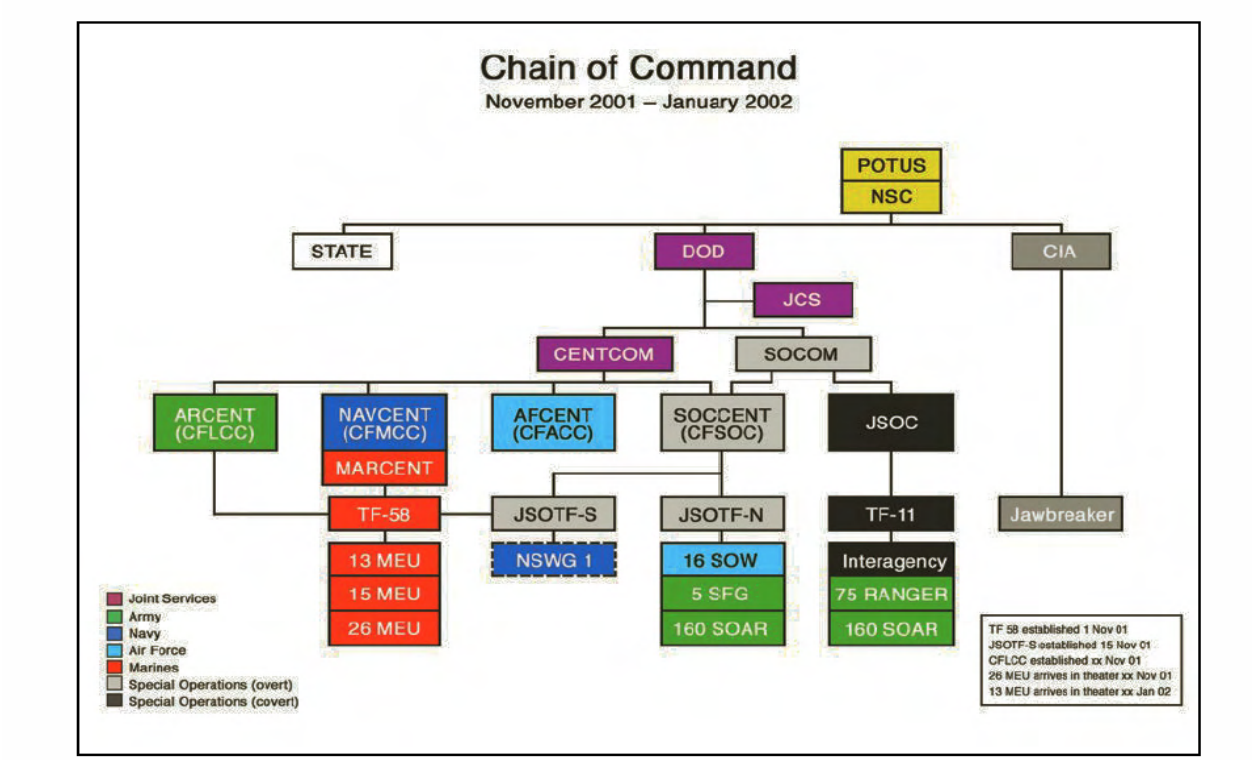
Figure 3: Post October 1993 Command Structure for US Forces Somalia



Source: Gary J. Ohls. Somalia...from the Sea. Naval War College Newport Paper 34. (Naval War College Press, Newport, Rhode Island. July 2009). 160, http://www.mccll.usmc.mil/.

Appendix 6

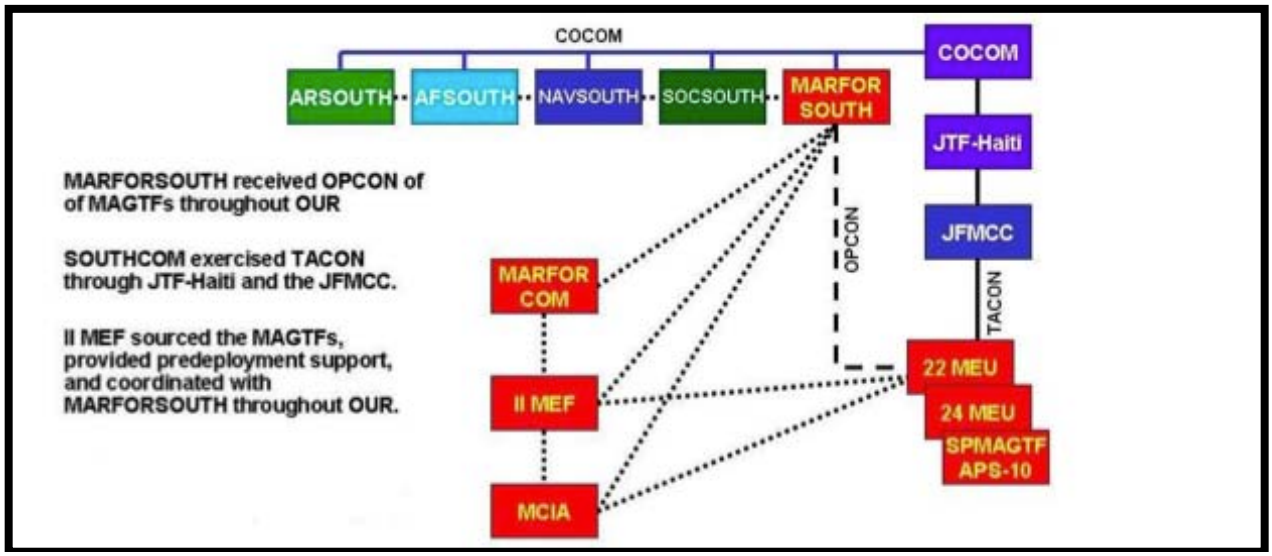
Figure 4: November 2001 – January 2002 OEF Command Relationship



Source: Colonel Nathan S. Lowery, "U.S. Marines in Afghanistan, 2001-2002: From the Sea. (U.S. Marine Corps History Division. Washington D.C. 2011). 91, www.mccll.usmc.mil.

Appendix 7

Figure 5: Operation UNIFIED RESPONSE USMC Command Relationships



Source: U.S. Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned. "Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief Operation Unified Response. Haiti Earthquake. 12 January 2010." (23 August 2010), 10, http://www.mccll.usmc.mil/ .

Appendix 8

Table 1: Aggregated MEU MEB CE options

Unit	Location	Advantages	Disadvantages
MEU CE	Assigned GCC	-First on scene; Best awareness; Can establish immediate command relationships w/new organizations; Already has relationships established in GCC; Understands MEU capabilities	-MEU Staff will inherit add'l duties for a force of equal size and capability; MEU CO in charge of other MEUs; MEUs may not have same priorities; May not provide unity of command or effort; First MEU CO on scene may not be the most senior in rank
MARFORNORTH	NORTHCOM	-Positioned in GCC	-Economy of force MARFOR; No assigned forces; Requires augmentation to maintain component responsibilities
MARFORSOUTH	SOUTHCOM	-Established relationships within GCC	-Economy of force MARFOR; No assigned forces; Requires augmentation to maintain component responsibilities; Not forward positioned in GCC
MARFOREUR	EUCOM	-Forward positioned in GCC; Established relationships within GCC	-Economy of force MARFOR; No assigned forces; Requires augmentation to maintain component responsibilities
MARFORAF	AFRICOM	-Established relationships within GCC	-Economy of force MARFOR; No assigned forces; Requires augmentation to maintain component responsibilities; Not forward positioned in GCC
MARCENT FWD	CENTCOM	-Forward positioned in Bahrain; JTF certified; FOC; scalable CE packages established; LNOs assigned to NAVCENT; Established relationships in CENTCOM	No assigned forces; Tasked from MARCENT in US

MARFORPAC	PACOM	-Have assigned forces (I & III MEF); Have established relationships with assigned forces; Pre-established CE contingency packages created for designated scenarios; Can provide a JTF HQ foundation	-Mobility lift from Hawaii can add add'l response time; Reduced component level capability
1st MEB CE	CENTCOM, PACOM, west coast of central and south America; Mexico	-Habitual relationships with west coast MEUs; Amphib experience built during exercises	-1st MEB CE is sourced from I MEF CE, which will leave I MEF CE staff degraded; Can't deploy I MEF CE simultaneously; MPSRON-2 assigned to I MEF
2nd MEB CE	CENTCOM; AFRICOM; EUCOM; east coast of central and south America and the Bahamas (NORTHCOM)	-Activated in Nov 2012; Habitual relationships with east coast MEUs; Amphib experience built during Bold Alligator Exercises; No longer have MPF squadron, so a C2 task for aggregated MEUs could replace II MEF/2nd MEB's previous MPF task requirements	-FOC in Oct 2015; Until FOC, requires augmentation from II MEF; Can't deploy II MEF CE and 2nd MEB CE simultaneously
3rd MEB CE	PACOM; CENTCOM as required	-Pre-established MEB CE and MEB contingency packages ready to deploy; III MEF has only constant forward deployed MEU; Wealth of experience from exercise and crisis response responses	-Can't C2 aggregated MEUs and conduct/C2 MPF ops for follow-on forces; III MEF CE staff is degraded; MPSRON-3 assigned to III MEF
Post Deployed MEU CE	Any GCC	-Most familiar with MEU employment and amphibious ops; Familiar with MEU amphibious relationships (only if two or more cycles); MEU CE is a standing staff directly subordinate to MEF CE	-Requires augmentation to form a MEB CE; If not augmented, a MEU CO could C2 other MEUs; No established SOPs with augments

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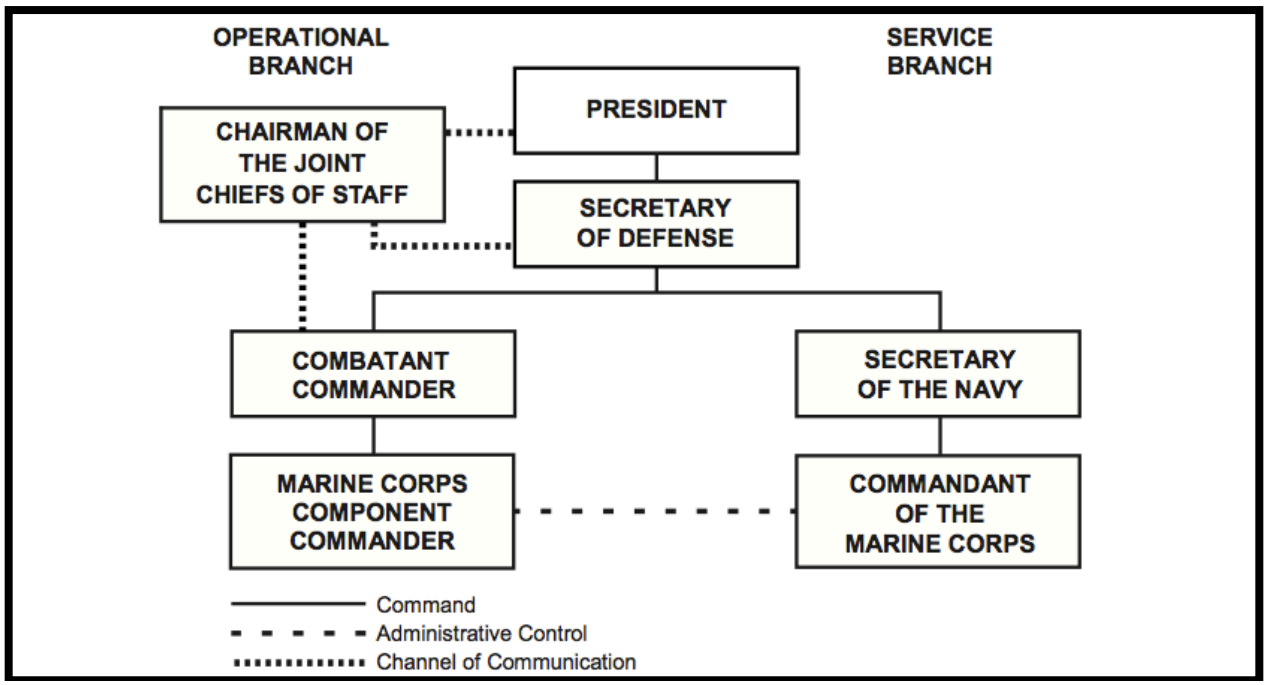
Appendix 9

Figure 6: MARFOR Regional Component Commands' Operational Chain of Command



Source: Commandant of the Marine Corps. *Marine Corps Componency, MCWP 3-40.8*. 13 February 2009. http://www.marines.mil/Portals/59/Publications/MCWP%20340.8%20Marine%20Corps%20Componency.pdf.

Appendix 10

Figure 7: Top MEB CE choices for GCCs to C2 aggregated MEUs with

Geographic Area of Focus	MEB CE (choice 1)	MEB CE (choice 2)
NORTHCOM (West of Mississippi River)	1st MEB	2nd MEB
NORTHCOM (East of Mississippi River)	2nd MEB	1st MEB
SOUTHCOM	2nd MEB	1st MEB
EUCOM	2nd MEB	1st MEB
AFRICOM	2nd MEB	1st MEB
CENTCOM	MARCENT FWD	1st MEB
PACOM	3rd MEB	MARFORPAC

Source: These options were created by the author using the analysis and sources listed in Appendix 8.

Glossary

Service Component Command: A command consisting of the Service component commander and all those Service forces, such as individuals, units, detachments, organizations, and installations under that command, include the support forces that have been assigned to a combatant command or further assigned to a subordinate unified command or joint task force.

Operational Control: Command authority that may be exercised by commanders at any echelon at or below the level of combatant command. Operational control is inherent in combatant command (command authority) and may be delegated within the command. Operational control is the authority to perform those functions of command over subordinate forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission. Operational control includes authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations and joint training necessary to accomplish missions assigned to the command. Operational control should be exercised through the commanders of subordinate organizations. Normally this authority is exercised through subordinate joint force commanders and Service and/or functional component commanders. Operational control normally provides full authority to organize commands and forces and to employ those forces as the commander in operational control considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions; it does not, in and of itself, include authoritative direction for logistics or matters of administration, discipline, internal organization, or unit training. Also called **OPCON.**

Tactical Control: Command authority over assigned or attached forces or commands, or military capability or forces made available for tasking, that is limited to the detailed direction and control of movements or maneuvers within the operational area necessary to accomplish missions or tasks assigned. Tactical control is inherent in operational control. Tactical control may be delegated to, and exercised at any level at or below the level of combatant command. Tactical control provides sufficient authority for controlling and directing the application of force or tactical use of combat support assets within the assigned mission or task. Also called **TACON.**

Marine Expeditionary Brigade: A Marine air-ground task force that is constructed around a reinforced infantry regiment, a composite Marine aircraft group, and a combat logistics regiment. The Marine expeditionary brigade, commanded by a general officer, is task-organized to meet the requirements of a specific situation. It can function as part of a joint task force, as the lead echelon of the Marine expeditionary force, or alone. It varies in size and composition, and is larger than a Marine expeditionary unit but smaller than a Marine expeditionary force. The Marine expeditionary brigade is capable of conducting missions across the full range of military operations. Also called **MEB.** A Marine air-ground task force that is constructed around a reinforced infantry regiment, a composite Marine aircraft group, and a combat logistics regiment. The Marine expeditionary brigade, commanded by a general officer, is task-organized to meet the requirements of a specific situation. It can function as part of a joint task force, as the lead echelon of the Marine expeditionary force, or alone. It varies in size and composition, and is larger than a Marine expeditionary unit but smaller than a Marine expeditionary force. The Marine expeditionary brigade is capable of conducting missions across the full range of military operations. Also called **MEB.**

Marine Expeditionary Unit: The MEUs, embarked aboard Navy amphibious ready groups (ARGs), form ARG/MEUs. The ARG/MEUs provide continuous, forward naval presence in key regions to conduct steady-state security cooperation, military engagement, and deterrence, as well as immediate response to episodic crises and contingencies. The ARG/MEUs may also be called upon to support major operations and campaigns in a variety of ways, such as enabling the introduction of other forces, acting as the lead echelon for expansion to a larger formation, or providing the geographic combatant commander an inherently mobile and flexible sea-based reserve. A MEU is commanded by a colonel. When embarked aboard an ARG, which is commanded by a Navy captain, a support relationship is normally established between them. A MEU consists of a command element, battalion landing team, combat logistics battalion, and a composite squadron.

Amphibious Readiness Group: At the most basic level, an amphibious force consists of a Navy element a group of ships known as an amphibious task force (ATF) and a landing force (LF) of U.S. Marines (and occasionally, U.S. Army troops), in total about 5,000 people. Together, these elements and supporting units are trained, organized, and equipped to perform amphibious operations. The Amphibious Ready Group consists of:

- An Amphibious Assault Ship (LHA or LHD) Primary landing ships, resembling small aircraft carriers, designed to put troops on hostile shores. In a secondary role, using AV-8B Harrier aircraft and anti-submarine warfare helicopters, these ships perform sea control and limited power projection missions.
- An Amphibious Transport Dock (LPD) Ship Warships that embark, transport, and land elements of a landing force for a variety of expeditionary warfare missions.
- A Dock Landing Ship (LSD) Dock Landing Ships support amphibious operations including landings via Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC), conventional landing craft and helicopters, onto hostile shores. The three classes of LSDs are the Harpers Ferry class, Whidbey Island class, and Anchorage class.
- A MEU.

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3. Commandant of the Marine Corps. *Marine Corps Operations*, page 2-12

4. The 11th, 13th, and 15th MEUs are stationed at Camp Pendleton, CA and under the command of I MEF. The 22nd, 24th, and 26th MEUs are stationed at Camp Lejeune, NC and under the command of II MEF. The 31st MEU is permanently forward deployed and is stationed in Okinawa, Japan under the command of III MEF.

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